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**UAMS College of Pharmacy Student Team Wins
Third Consecutive National Business Plan Competition**

LITTLE ROCK — A team of student pharmacists from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) College of Pharmacy was named the winner of the 19th annual National Community Pharmacy Association’s (NCPA) Good Neighbor Pharmacy Pruitt-Schutte Student Business Plan Competition.

With this year’s win at nationals, the college became the first to win three consecutive competitions. No college has won the competition more times than the College of Pharmacy, which won in 2012, 2015 and 2017 in addition to the last three years.

“The creativity and innovation of our students never cease to amaze me,” said College of Pharmacy Dean Cindy Stowe, Pharm.D. “Competitions like this one solidly link the curriculum to the practice of pharmacy and allow our students to jump-start their careers by providing professional networking, relationship building and learning that will pay off as they enter the profession. The students and advisors put in a tremendous amount of effort in preparing the business plan and formal presentation. Both are the standard of success.”

The winning team includes captain Tanner Cooper and team members Riley Caraway, Lindsey Cooper and Hannah Howard. Seth Heldenbrand, Pharm.D., the college’s associate dean of experiential education, was team adviser, with Schwanda Flowers, Pharm.D., as co-adviser.

“When they announced we won, I was extremely proud of my team,” Tanner Cooper said. “We put in so many hours and to see it pay off was very reassuring. I am very glad I pursued this, and it is something I will cherish for my entire career.”

“After having the opportunity to watch the competition live last year, I knew this was something that I wanted to do,” Howard said. “The process of developing and writing a business plan from scratch was rigorous, but we put in lots of hard work and it paid off in the end. My teammates are some of my closest friends, and winning the competition with them was even more special.”

“The experience was amazing,” Lindsey Cooper said. “I learned so much about community pharmacy and ownership, and I got to make connections with Arkansas pharmacy owners. Once we got on stage, I felt so confident in my team and our plan.”

“Coming off of back-to-back UAMS victories, we knew we had big shoes to fill, but I think that motivated us even more,” Caraway said. “I cannot quantify the value of what I learned along the way. The connections I made and confidence I gained will forever benefit me as a pharmacist.”

“We are very proud of our student teams and the work they put into this competition,” Heldenbrand said. “UAMS was the first school to ever win two years in a row in 2021, and immediately after that we knew we wanted to be the first school to win three years in a row. Luckily, we had some very motivated students who were up to the task. When it came time to compete, they delivered. They could not have done it better, and we are so proud of them.”

UAMS finished ahead of the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy and the University of South Carolina College of Pharmacy, who placed second and third, respectively. The three finalist teams presented their business plans in a live competition on Oct. 1 in Kansas City.

“The NCPA Foundation helps cultivate the next generation of independent community pharmacy owners and the Good Neighbor Pharmacy NCPA Pruitt-Schutte Student Business Plan Competition is our crown jewel in those efforts,” said Jerry Shapiro, Pharm.D., president of the NCPA Foundation. “Many past participants in the competition have gone into ownership and point to this experience as being an important steppingstone in achieving that goal.”

The UAMS chapter received \$3,000 and an additional \$3,000 was contributed to the school in Stowe’s name to promote independent community pharmacy. The team members, advisers and dean will also receive paid registration, travel and lodging to NCPA’s 2023 Multiple Locations Conference, to be held in February.

The 2022 competition drew participants from 25 schools and colleges of pharmacy across the United States. The business plan competition is the first national competition of its kind in the pharmacy profession. The contest is named in honor of two great champions of independent community pharmacy, the late Neil Pruitt Sr. and the late H. Joseph Schutte. Its goal is to motivate student pharmacists to create a business model for buying an existing independent community pharmacy or developing a new one. The competition is supported by Good Neighbor Pharmacy, Pharmacists Mutual Insurance Company and the NCPA Foundation.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 3,047 students, 873 medical residents and fellows, and six

dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 11,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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